

Testimony for Public Hearing
Connecticut General Assembly
Energy and Technology Committee
March 1, 2016, 1:00 PM

Brian Sullivan
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Raised H.B. No. 5427 –

AN ACT CONCERNING THE SHARED CLEAN ENERGY FACILITY PILOT PROGRAM.

To make changes to the shared clean energy facility pilot program regarding utilities' cost recovery, tariff mechanisms, and other technical changes.

Good afternoon, Members of the Energy and Technology Committee. My name is Brian Sullivan and I manage the multifamily energy efficiency and solar lending programs for the Connecticut Housing Investment Fund, or “CHIF.” CHIF has financed numerous solar projects since the 1980s and has recently expanded its ability to blend solar PV installations with energy efficiency upgrades for affordable multifamily housing, through collaborative work with the Connecticut Green Bank, utility companies and other stakeholders in the energy space.

As a result of our extensive experience in the solar market, we believe that shared solar is an equitable means of delivering energy cost savings to many more Connecticut residents than the current framework allows, and we are asking the Committee to eliminate some of the unnecessary delays and opportunity-killing provisions of HB 5427.

First, we know from the results of our own solar financing program that multifamily solar projects rarely make economic sense unless the financing term can be extended to *at least* 20 years, and projects amortized over that term length are still barely viable, even with a 30% tax equity contribution toward the cost. If we are to truly commit to solar energy as a pathway to a clean and prosperous future, and realize the substantial economic benefits that shared solar-friendly states like Massachusetts and Maryland are already seeing as a result of their support, we need to allow for financing term lengths for these projects to extend for the full useful life of the equipment, which is *25-30 years*.

More generally, Connecticut should look to the benefits being reaped by other states who have implemented full-scale shared solar programs, and proceed with a full rollout, rather than spending another two years in a pilot phase. During those two years, jobs in the solar industry that could have been created in Connecticut will be going to other states with more friendly legal and regulatory environments. We have an excellent opportunity to be on the cutting edge of this market, and we all know how important it is for Connecticut to improve its current business creation reputation.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,



Brian Sullivan
Connecticut Housing Investment Fund, Inc.